

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Applicants have amended the specification as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims 1, 2, and 10-26 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, in favor of newly presented Claims 27-52. Accordingly, Claims 27-52 are pending, with Claims 27 and 43 being independent. The outstanding rejections are, of course, moot in view of the cancellation of the rejected claims. Moreover, the newly presented claims distinguish patentably from the Luthi and Matsumiya references applied in the rejections.

Independent Claim 27, for example, recites a clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, including a plurality of first plates having first clamping surfaces made of a material of a first hardness and a plurality of second plates having second clamping surfaces made of a material of a second hardness and slidable relative to the first plates. Further, each first clamping surface contacts an adjacent second clamping surface.

Independent Claim 43 recites a clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, including at least two plates that can be clamped to one another, the

plates having clamping surfaces that slide relative to one another in a collision. The clamping surfaces are made of materials of different hardnesses such that, during the relative sliding of the clamping surfaces in a collision, the material of lower hardness is sheared by the material of higher hardness and a build-up of the sheared material is formed between the clamping surfaces so as to increase a clamping load.

It is apparent that Luthi, the primary reference, neither teaches nor suggests a clamping apparatus having the above mentioned features of Claims 27 and 43. Moreover, Matsumiya fails to remedy the deficiencies of Luthi with respect to the present claims.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the outstanding rejections be withdrawn and that this application now be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-10290) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing

of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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